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By KSH, NARA, Date 7/6/01  
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Telcon  
The President  
1/14/70; 5:40

K: I just want to run thru some information items to you. Walters saw Xuan Thuy today in Paris and gave him a message. They were the friendliest they have ever been. Walters said I wouldn't be available before Feb 8 and they said why so late, why not faster. The reason we said Feb 8 was so we could do it while Bill was out of the country.

Pres: I still think it is a good idea.

K: I just made Walters read something to them. It was to be a framework beyond what was said at the Majestic -- if you are willing to talk in the same spirit we suggest you propose a time and place. We suggested Feb 8 and we did not leave a piece of paper with them.

P: But I think the upshot of it is that they want a meeting.

K: That was Walters' impression. They said they would let us know. Whatever they do we will be in good shape. We offered them twice a meeting and whatever they do we are in good shape. If we do go to a meeting they will have to admit they are willing to talk beyond the framework of the Majestic.

P: I suppose they will want to take the line they will say what have you got to say. I was reading a couple of nights ago the whole record of Churchill's account on Teheran, Malta and his negotiations with Harriman and what happened in terms of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc. And really it is a shameful record. It is an outrage. I thought Eisenhower was taking the orders from the top but the whole emphasis was on getting along with the Russians whereas Churchill was concerned with re-drawing the map of Europe.

K: He was thinking of what would happen after the war. P: Right. And the whole thing was the absolute hardness of Stalin during the whole thing. The Russians did not give anything on anything.

~~XXXXXXRussia negotiators focused on victory~~

K: The Russians got us so focused on victory they never talked about peace.

P: You know that in the days of McCarthy and Jenner they really overstated it but basically they happened to be right. We did screw up the peace.

K: For example, the invasion of Southern France. If those units had been put into the Balkans the whole thing would have been different.

P: I think you should scan through it and see just what happened. He would send a message over and obviously the American President was responding and was responding in an almost unbelievably naive way.

K: And these Kremlinologists were saying just what Thompson told you. You have to be in good faith.

P: Right and Truman turned down a meeting with Churchill first and then came back with the proposition that Truman ought to meet with Stalin first. Well that would have been the most terrible thing. It is well to read this stuff in order to know what we are dealing with now.

K: Hopkins wanted Truman and Roosevelt to be the intermediary between England and Russia, grossly overestimating the British strength and grossly underestimating the Russian intentions.

P: What I am getting it is that I don't know what these clowns want to talk about but the line we take is either they talk or we are going to sit it out. I don't feel this is any time for concession. And mainly because I feel that's the only way we are going to get anywhere is by talking this way.

K: Mr. President I presented these proposals to the meeting of the Special Studies Group today and Elliot Richardson has changed his mind. He says it would be a grave mistake. So we have some support in State. He said if they are willing I think you should take a shot at it on the 8th. I will give to you what I am going to say -- it will be a hard line.

P: First, say we have got to talk about a coalition government. Just close the book and walk out. They will say we have got to talk on basically more points than those.

K: If this analysis we have made is correct they are in trouble. That doesn't mean they are not going to hit us this year. They may hit us this year in the Delta and in I-Corps. But that will be their last shot.

P: I agree, they may hit us but they haven't got a lot to hit us with, but it isn't like the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge. They don't have the forces to mount any kind of sustained thing.

K: If we had forces in the Delta I won't worry about it all. They may overrun the VN units, but I don't believe it.

P: Well I have been hearing some good reports about the South Vietnamese forces. Don't you agree?

K: I am going to suspend judgment until Haig comes back. But the smart thing for them to do would be to wait until we draw down more forces and wait until next year. If they hit us this year it will mean our analysis is correct and they are losing. One thing I can do is warn them and tell them if there is an offensive ~~and~~ there there will be no telling what we will do.

P: Yes, they will have to take note of what the President has said and you cannot be \_\_\_\_\_ as to any commitment on that point. And if ~~they start to think~~ that is the way they want it that is the way it will be.

K: The French Ambassador came in with a personal message to you from Pompidou about the Mid-East, the sale of Mirages to Libya. The number they gave and that was in the papers is 50, and the fact of the matter is 100. It is just more than the Libyans can use in 50 years.

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K: It is really pushing the arms race several notches higher.

P: What ~~will~~ are the French up to.

K: With the Germans screwing around in Eastern Europe the French want to start their own \_\_\_\_\_ to Moscow. They know they have nothing to offer in Mid-Europe.

P: I suppose Pompidou has told the Russians.

K: The Russians most certainly know.

P: What is their game? Our game has to be to see if the Israeli can take care of themselves.

K: I think you have to move with the Israeli aid request and be generous. Lucet told me this is going to represent 12% of their total exports. They are not going to give up that much money.

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..... They are sending a note to Eban that we have always been friends. We will check everything with you. And I thought Mr. President you might as well get credit for that rather than State. I told him I wanted him to know that the message to Goldwater from Golda Meir to you had been taken very seriously and that they would be seeing results soon. I think you are the one who needs the support here.

P: I think they are getting a little credit here. I am going to talk to Bill. He seemed so bent on going down this Four Power line and making this talk that he made. When I talked to him about it he said he talked to Javits and Javits isn't too worried about it. Then he said he had spoken to many Jewish-American groups and the American-Jewish people are not so worried. He must mesmerize himself when he talks to these people. You have a policy going and you are always trying to prove it is right. When we have a policy that's wrong the thing to do is drop it.

K: I always have a man on my staff act as a Devil's Advocate. Two other things -- one is I talked to Packard and Wheeler today about the Defense budget and it really is getting very rough.

P: I know it is rough.

K: They are probably below the limit of what is wise now. I don't see how we can cut more than \$300 million out of it.

P: The only thing I say, and it is to an extent a phony, is in terms of absorbing the pay increase deal. It is way ahead and things can happen between now and then.

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K: Isn't that next year?

P: The pay increase does not come on. We are slipping the whole thing to the last half of FY 71 so it doesn't come into effect until January and it is \$800 million. What I am getting at is this -- and it may be what we are going to have to do -- we have to get the budget down to \$200 billion, \$500 million. Where would that get the three?

K: They would get the three by cutting each of the services -- we are taking about 100 out of R&D which is not good to do, but we can live with it. Then we are taking some out of Safeguard by stretching it a bit.

P: Stretching it a bit does not bother me too much.

K: But it is good to remain \_\_\_\_\_.

P: And the main thing the authorization has got to be for the whole thing.

K: We are taking \$50 million from each of the services ~~back~~ by knocking out \$10 million here and there.

P: We don't think you can get more than \$300? Why don't you talk to Laird on the basis on the other 200 just basically the fact of trying to absorb the pay increase to that extent. First see also the possibility that Congress may come up with the damn thing and go over it anyway. But if Congress doesn't that is fine. But, well anyway you are ~~fix~~ at three now, you think you can get three, but the five is very difficult.

K: The five is almost impossible without cutting forces even more and they are really ---

P: Nothing you could stretch -- nothing that -- well we are taking a look at the thing but just continue to work on it, Henry. I am chopping that damn Space program by another 300. I don't think there is any problem there. You can turn that around you see.

K: But the trouble is you could easily find yourself in a situation two to three years from now ~~is~~ where you just don't have the forces for an emergency. If there is anything unexpected next year we are in trouble as it is.

P: I talked to Ehrlichman. He says you have got to have forces. I have no desire at all to cut -- I don't think we should have cut what we have cut. Frankly, we are in this kind of business where if you don't cut defense some you could not get to these other departments.

K: They cut already 11.15.

P: I know the whole story.

K: But then we took 435 on top and now we are talking about 300 more.

P: Maybe I should take 500 out of Space.

K: Well let me see what I can get out of CIA or are you doing that separately?

P: Both CIA and AEC, Ehrlichman is supposed to be working on those. Maybe we could clip them for a little bit more. I must say what we get from CIA is so ~~pus~~ pusillanimous -- how about NSA?

K: I am sure that is over funded but I don't know where to cut them without a study.

P: Talk about your 200. I will be talking to Ehrlichman. You help him on three things -- on CIA, on NASA. NASA is \_\_\_\_\_ -- the difference is between 3.5 and 3.2.

K: At any rate that we can retrieve and nothing will happen to the country except postponing an opportunity. On NASA we can live with it.

P: All right, I will talk to Ehrlichman again. But you work with him tonight or tomorrow morning on CIA. See what you can do there. ~~They~~ They have got to take one. We took 175 out of HUD which was a hell of a cut.

K: Rogers has asked whether you objected if he went to Nigeria.

P: I don't ~~the~~ object except for one thing. I don't want to have that Lagos government on the back when this Gowon is making speeches that are as strong as that. Tell him he has got to make a judgement on where he goes but tell him I think he has got to deal very strongly. Did you know they have had a demonstration in Rome. The Catholics. The Belgians are going to try to fly in some help. Basically we are talking about religious. This is a Catholic thing. Does Gowon refers to us as having blood on our hands?

K: No, he talks about these voluntary relief organizations.

P: I think the way with Bill -- we don't want to argue about it. You could just say to him look Bill, the President has confidence in you. But you must make a cold judgment on this. Here is where we need that Vatican ambassador. I would like to know what the ~~Vatican~~ Vatican feels about this. Don't we have some responsibility for 400 million people? They are starving aren't they?

K: Yes, Mr. President, every week they kill a few tens of thousands of people.

P: I don't think they feel we are going sort of ~~hanging~~ hind-tit to Wilson and sucking around that government. Tell Bill if he announces he is going to Lagos he should do it on the basis that he wants to go and be of assistance. If he could play it that way. .... But certainly the Nigerians have got us where the hair is short. If they don't let us in we can't get in. I think Bill ought to play that cold and help the Nigerians too.

K: A lot of the State Dept people here say by our being so active this weekend that Gowon ~~didn't know~~ would get mad at us.

P: I understand that but this is a civil war. Tell Bill I think he has got a great opportunity here. I would appreciate it if he goes and that if he does indicate Presidential concern that we have expressed so deeply and we don't want to interfere with internal affairs but he ought to make a little statement about ~~our interest~~ our interest in the humanitarian concern. He must talk to the leaders there. I do know that if we go in and just sort of turn our backs on this think, like Henry, we could look awful bad.

K: You have been getting a lot of mail from Catholic leaders like Father Hessberg.

P: I would like Bill to contact Hessberg and Cardinal Cook. I think it would be very good internal American politics if he could indicate to the Catholic leaders before he goes that he is going to exert all the influence of the U.S. to render relief. One other thing. I have been sitting here & working and I have reached the conclusion that I have just read a book on all the messages that have been delivered. It really has to do with the concept of the Presidency. The State of the Union is really now an anachronism. I have found that many of the best State-of-the-Unions have been less than 30 minutes. Wilson's first was only 10 minutes. Eisenhowers were 55 minutes to an hour. So were Truman's. The reason was that the custom developed to make them a laundry list and they bored the people to death.

K: I would not do that, Mr. President.

P: The question is whether we should have 300 words about foreign policy. Could you figure up 300 words about foreign policy? I would like to ~~say~~ say I am going to treat foreign policy in a message to the Congress which I am going to send on blank. The main thing about that is to say something that indicates the State of the Union should be strong and forceful and also if we can use it as an occasion not simply to say well this is what we are doing, etc., but maybe to think of a new phrase.

You can talk a little to Saphire if you like. Maybe he can help a little on it. Foreign policy should be very strong and I don't think we should say a hell of a lot about it.

K: In foreign policy you are in good shape. You just give a little of the philosophy doctrine and say you are going to cover it in greater detail.

P: We have to say a little about Vietnam -- maybe pick up what we said Nov 3rd and say it a little differently. We are for a just peace. We have seen progress in Asia, in Japan. We have seen progress here. There are other areas in the world where there are still problems. The Mid-East is still difficult. I will cover it all. We are not going to retreat from our world commitments. We are going to keep them. I would use it to make another whack at the Nixon Doctrine. The Nixon Doctrine is not a retreat from our world responsibilities. It is a method -- a new way. Whether it is Latin America or any other area in the world. If you don't mention everybody they will feel hurt. My point is that we feel that it is time for the industrial nations of the world -- all the nations of the world. You might give it a historical slant. As we enter the '70's more than 25 years ~~xxxx~~ have passed since WW II -- we made a new policy to deal with the new situation. For 25 years the US had to assume the major responsibility. We are for negotiation rather than for confrontation.

K: This is the theme already of it, from some of my notes on that. What I feel really was expressed by LBJ. Yesterday he said the Nixon that showed purposeful and confident is the old Nixon. This is the wrong way of putting it. But what he means is tough and strong and purposeful.

N: That says not soft and not begging and screaming. And I think this speech did not indicate a strong posture.

K: And this speech could have been given by any president or by Humphrey. It is not really addressed to the peoples' concern or to the real problems but to talk about solutions, yes, we have got to do something. What you said, we could be the richest people and be the unhappiest.

N: If that thing was said by the Kennedys the papers would have emoted all over the place and said it was great. As I sit here, and I know I will be here all night, all day tomorrow, Saturday and Sunday, but to have to go through this.

K: It is too much ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ when you think what

P: It is too much when you think what I ought to be using my time for.

K: The country hasn't heard from you now in a while and no one else can lead it. I think you shouldn't basically have to do it and as you have pointed out that is one of the basic weaknesses in our structure. You put it well on the plane the other day -- you have some good writers, but you don't have any good speakers.

N: When you think of TR and Wilson - they could take the time to do their own. But Roosevelt had a series of good speech writers.

K: He was fortunate in that respect. I think it ought to show strength and purpose and be a little off-beat from what the liberals are saying, because they will respect you for that. Getting back to the budget, on Defense I think there is another 50 to 100 more lying around but we are close to running risks now, specifically to the morale. I think we can get 3 and I think we can get Wheeler to defend it and stick with it.

P: But beyond that you don't know.

K: I think beyond that you have to just order it and if you order it you can get it, of course.

P: Remember I want you to look at NASA, CIA and you don't think you could knock NSA down some?

K: Let me see what I can do. I know just don't know their budget but I will take a look at that one. That doesn't bother me as much as the Defense budget.

P: Yes, but if we can get it out of that -- that is part of the Defense budget. I think after all we have kept Helms around and he has got to play our game.